

## FIAF COMMISSION ON DOCUMENTATION

Minutes of the meeting held February 11-13, 1974, in Amsterdam.

### Members

Eileen Bowser, Department of Film, The Museum of Modern Art, New York  
Brenda Davies, The National Film Archive, British Film Institute, London  
Karen Jones, Det Danske Filmmuseum, Copenhagen  
John Luijckx, Nederlands Filmmuseum, Amsterdam  
Michael Moulds, Editor, International Index to Film Periodicals, London  
Bujor Ripeanu, Arhiva Natională de Filme, Bucarest  
Eberhard Spiess, Deutsches Institut für Filmkunde, Wiesbaden

### Observer

Jan-Hein Bal, Nederlands Filmmuseum, Amsterdam

### Absent Members

Alfred Krautz  
Anne Schlosser  
Vladimir Vimr

### I. Opening Remarks

Eileen Bowser, President of the Commission, asked for approval of the minutes of the previous meeting, and of the agenda, which was accepted. She reported a letter from Alfred Krautz explaining his absence due to lack of time to obtain a visa, and reserved the remainder of the items in his letter for the places in the agenda where they would apply. She also reported that Anne Schlosser was unable to attend due to severe cutbacks in funds for the Charles K. Feldman Library at The American Film Institute's Center for Advanced Studies, and further that Anne Schlosser thought she would have to resign from the Commission for this reason. The Commission agreed to wait until the next meeting before accepting her resignation, to see if the economic situation might improve. Eileen Bowser added that she had written a letter of protest on behalf of the Documentation Commission to The American Film Institute when they had originally announced plans to close the library. Brenda Davies proposed that the Commission formally record its support of the position taken on its behalf by the President, and this was accepted.

Eileen Bowser reported that she had written to the Fédération Internationale de Documentation (FID) as instructed by the minutes of the London meeting. FID had replied and sent materials which were available for study at this meeting. FID expressed particular interest in the proposals for the classification of film literature, since FID sponsors the UDC system. The Commission agreed to ask the President to inform FID concerning the present status of its work on classification, but decided not to consider membership in FID at this time, as FID had proposed, especially as the dues are rather high.

## II. FIAF Directory of Film and Television Documentation Sources

Brenda Davies reported that there had not been enough time since the last meeting to prepare the draft Directory. She had now received twenty-six replies to the questionnaire, and felt she had sufficient material to prepare the draft for the next meeting of the Commission. It was agreed that inquiries should be made to find out if R. R. Bowker would be interested in it as a possible publication.

## III. Guidelines for Describing Unpublished Scripts

Eileen Bowser submitted her revised draft. She asked whether the intended use of the Guidelines should be to set up a central registry of FIAF script holdings, or whether this was not a realistic or useful goal. The Commission felt that it would be useful, since inquiries could be made at a central point to find out where a specific script was located. Although it was not decided at this time where the registry might be, it was noted that the Guidelines should include a place for noting whether the script was available for inter-library loan. Some changes were suggested in the Guidelines: 1) following the date of the script, if later revised pages were inserted, the cataloguer should add "revisions;" 2) if pages are not numbered, or are numbered separately by reel, they should be approximated, e.g., [ca 250 pp.]; 3) the description of notes should be broadened to include any additional information not specifically covered by the Guidelines. In conclusion, the Commission decided that when the revisions were made, the Guidelines should be considered ready to be sent out as a recommendation of the Documentation Commission, to all FIAF members. It was agreed to ask Michelle Snapes of the National Film Archive to prepare a French version for the Commission, and to ask the FIAF Secretariat to print and distribute the Guidelines. Eileen Bowser said she thought this could be accomplished during the summer of 1974, and that the Commission could consider plans to form a central registry for scripts at the next meeting.

During the above discussion, there was an interruption for morning coffee, and Jan de Vaal, Director of the Nederlands Filmmuseum, came to welcome the Commission members. Following coffee, the members were taken on a tour of the library of the Nederlands Filmmuseum. Later, they were shown the other departments and met the staff of the archive.

## IV. International Filmography

Eberhard Spiess reported that he had not yet been able to contact Wolfgang Klaue, President of the FIAF Cataloguing Commission, to find out if the planned joint meeting of the commissions to discuss this topic would take



place in the fall of 1974. He agreed that he would do so. The Commission decided to hold a preliminary discussion in preparation for that meeting. Karen Jones presented some statistics on the number of feature films produced annually in various countries, to prove that the exchange of filmographic information, if limited to feature films, would not be an onerous task, and would entail much less work than the periodical indexing scheme. Discussing the largest national production, that of India and Japan, it was suggested that the trade associations of these countries might be persuaded to give the information. In this connection, Eileen Bowser proposed that she should write the national trade publications on behalf of the Documentation Commission, to ask once again if they would give the original titles of films as well as the translation or release titles. To return to the exchange of filmographic information, it was discovered that most countries would have to make only a small number of entries each year. There should be about 100 dispatches per year to about forty archives.

However, when the Commission turned to the question of the form to be used and the data to be included, it was soon decided that this is a very complicated question. It needs the help of the Cataloguing Commission, since this commission has already done some work in this direction, especially toward making minimum data lists, dictionaries of filmographic terms in various languages, etc. The Documentation Commission wondered if the two commissions had the same purposes in mind for such an exchange, as this will affect the form it would take. It was resolved once again to request an exchange of minutes with the Cataloguing Commission. Eileen Bowser promised to notify members well in advance if the next meeting was to be a joint one, in order that all could prepare for it.

#### V. Subcommittee Report on International Directory of Set Designers

Alfred Krautz had sent a proposal for the Directory, together with the request that the Commission should propose it to the Executive Committee and to the 1974 Congress as a project of the Documentation Commission. In the absence of Dr. Krautz, after a lengthy discussion concerning the purposes of the Directory as he appeared to conceive of them, the members decided they had some questions concerning its practicality. On the other hand, they were reluctant to give up this very interesting idea, and it was decided to write to Dr. Krautz, summarizing the discussions, to see if he would be interested in approaching the subject in another way. The decision to accept the project as part of the Commission's work was postponed until the next meeting, when the presence of Dr. Krautz could be expected. Everyone agreed, however, that should Dr. Krautz prefer to go ahead with his scheme as he had outlined it, each member should be willing to give such help as they could. The President will write to Dr. Krautz.

#### VI. Report on Data Processing

Eberhard Spiess reported on his investigations into electronic data processing techniques with IBM (Mainz). He was asked to continue his research. The Commission adopted a recommendation that there should be one person in each archive who would take a course in data processing, in order to have some understanding of the techniques before the time came to employ the new methods in film and television documentation.

VII. Television Documentation

Eileen Bowser admitted that this item was on the agenda only because the minutes of the last meeting reported that it should be listed, but that no one had prepared any work for it. However, it was decided that at least two television documentation experts would be invited to attend as observers at the next meeting, if it would be practical in terms of the agenda. Brenda Davies named one such expert in London, and Eberhard Spiess mentioned one in the Bundesrepublik Deutschland, who might be willing to attend. However, should the next meeting be a joint one with the Cataloguing Commission, or the host for the next meeting find it impractical, this item of the agenda will be postponed.

VIII. Subcommittee Report on the Classification of Film Literature

This report had been postponed from its place on the agenda, waiting for a letter from Gillian Hartnoll, who had been prevented by illness from attending the meeting as an observer. This letter had now arrived and was read. She reported that her revised draft was not yet ready, but she was now passing it to an expert for comments on the television section. She had revised her notation to be compatible with computer needs, and made several other revisions. The subcommittee reported that they would do further testing of the two proposed schemes. It was decided that the subcommittee should submit their drafts to additional experts for testing and for comments, and report the results at the next meeting.

IX. Periodical Indexing

Eileen Bowser reported on her meeting with the publisher of the International Index to Film Periodicals, R. R. Bowker. A new editor at Bowker had replaced David Biesel, and his name is Richard Gray. The raise in payment from \$10 to \$15 per page had been confirmed. The sales figures for the first three months were disappointingly low, less than 400 in domestic sales, but it was hoped that this was due to the fact that promotion was slow, and the reviews were only now appearing. In addition, Brenda Davies reported that the English branch of Bowker had only received the materials for publication in January, and as this branch handles all European sales, there were none to report as yet. The members discussed ways to help the promotion of the book.

Michael Moulds reported on the current state of the work for the 1973 volume, and the plans for the proposed move to London. It was discovered that there was not yet enough information on the costs involved in moving the project to London, although it was hoped this could be accomplished by April 1, 1974. Various alternatives to methods of printing the cards were discussed, but this could not be resolved without further investigations of the costs.

Karen Jones presented the project accounts, which she had recast since the beginning of the project to match the budget year of FIAF. By the inclusion of a list of debtors and creditors, she was able to show that when the accounts for 1973 were finally closed, the project would have a small surplus, and could pay back the funds advanced to the project by FIAF. However, when the 1974 budget (as approved by the 1973 Congress and revised by the Executive Committee at Lausanne in October 1973) was examined, it was agreed that it was doubtful the budget could be met without a deficit. It was not possible to be precise

about the expenses, since when the project moved to London, there would be many figures unknown. And since the sales to date had been disappointing, it was thought that the budgeted income was too high. The Commission decided to try to find a way to make all FIAF members pay equally for the card service, especially in light of the fact that Madrid had written to say they could no longer pay for it. It seemed unfair that the card service for Madrid should be dropped, while eight other FIAF members received it free of charge.

Karen Jones reported that FIAF Treasurer Jon Stenklev had agreed that it was impossible now to prepare the 1975 budget for approval at the 1974 Congress, as there were not yet sufficient figures for it.

Karen Jones then outlined some proposals for changing the indexing project in the hopes of bringing in more subscriptions for the card service as well as increasing the sales of the annual volume. The Commission accepted her proposals that the filmographic periodicals Variety (film reviews only), Monthly Film Bulletin, and Film Facts, should be indexed by the Editor, and, in order that the number of cards should not be too large to be practical, to index selectively the minor language periodicals for the card service only, while they would continue to be fully indexed for the annual volume. Karen Jones explained that she meant by minor language periodicals the Scandinavian languages, the Dutch, Rumanian, Polish, etc. It was decided to retain for the card service all entries concerning the national production, and other items which are easily used without understanding the language, such as filmographies. Karen Jones presented some statistics which showed that this plan would result in an increase of about 1,000 cards per year, or about 80 extra pages in the annual volume, which would mean \$1,200 additional payment from the publisher. Although this payment would not be received until much later, it could be counted on to more than cover any extra costs that the plan might entail.

At the same time, it was decided to offer a reduced-price subscription to the index of the English-language periodicals only, for those libraries in English-speaking countries with insufficient demand for the foreign language periodicals. As few institutions in the United States had yet subscribed to the service, it was hoped that this offer might bring in additional income.

The Commission drafted a questionnaire to be sent out by the Editor to all the users of the card service, to find out how much the cards are in use and how the subscribers would like to see them changed to be more useful. Michael Moulds agreed to make the final questionnaire and sent it to the FIAF Secretariat for distribution as soon as possible.

The Commission then considered proposals for adding other periodicals to the scheme. Cantrill's Film Notes was rejected, but Ça and Cinématographe were accepted pending finding someone who would index them. On the question of adding non-film periodicals, it was decided that it was not yet the time to include them. Karen Jones had found that 60 such periodicals listed by the Film Literature Index for the as-yet-unpublished quarterly were already in the Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature, and therefore it might be an unnecessary duplication to add them. In this connection, Eileen Bowser reported a telephone conversation with the editor of Film Literature Index, who expected the first issue momentarily from the printers, and promised to send a copy, but it had not yet arrived. She also reported that Pat Sheehan of the Library of Congress had undertaken to do the indexing for the U.S. periodicals added at the last meeting of the Commission, and that Anthony Slide of the AFI Archives in Washington, had offered to take on the indexing work that Anne Schlosser could no longer do.



There was a brief discussion on the format for entering the items from the filmographic periodicals, and it was decided that the notation "cred." for credits would now be added to all film entries. Michael Moulds proposed some changes in entries, to make "film review" simply "review" and "short film review" to "short review." He also wished to incorporate spelled-out numbers in square brackets within the film title, e.g., 10 [TEN] TALL MEN. He said that from now on, filmmaking would be spelled without the hyphen. A proposal was rejected to omit the hyphen when using the initials of a person with a hyphenated name. Eileen Bowser said that the new editor at Bowker had proposed that the annual volume should include an index to authors of the articles, and the Editor agreed to consider this. It was also agreed to add a line to the introductory matter, proposed by the production staff at Bowker, to explain that the book was reproduced photographically from cards.

X. Date and Place of the Next Meeting

Eileen Bowser announced that Alfred Krautz had written of the plans of the Staatliches Filmarchiv der DDR to be host to the next Commission meeting, but that the decision would not be final until the end of March. The meeting is expected to be held at Potsdam from October 28 to November 1, 1974, and the expenses for accommodation will be met by the Staatliches Filmarchiv for each member and also observers. The Commission agreed they would be happy to accept this offer when the decision is made final.

XI. Conclusion

In closing, Eileen Bowser asked certain members to remain for more detailed discussion of the Indexing Project, especially the proposed move to London. She then thanked John Luijckx on behalf of the Commission for his excellent arrangements and cordial hospitality. It was specially noted that the staff of the Nederlands Filmmuseum had been extremely helpful, going so far as to prepare delicious Dutch meals every day for lunch on the archive premises. The meeting was then adjourned.